

# This Old House

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## on the cover



Cover Photo credit: JAMES L. KELLEY  
Styling by: JAMES L. KELLEY



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Now you can download the latest issue of THH on your tablet before the print issue is available. Go to [trackhouse.com/tablet](http://trackhouse.com/tablet)

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## Letter FROM TOH

### Finally, it's raining cats (instead of dogs)

**W**hen I came to *This Old House* in April of this year, I realized one thing immediately: The dogs were everywhere. In photographs after photographs, those they were, tongues out and tails wagging, in laundry rooms, on back porches, on covers.

Now, don't get me wrong. I like dogs. I grew up with two—Oscar, a springer spaniel who hid two of my three cats round finally disappeared trailing 20 feet of clothes on...and Ginger, a single mac who would wait patiently beside your chair for you to pour the drops of your coffee into her bowl.

But since I left home, I have always loved web-cats. And I'm not alone. In 2003, the number of cats in America living with people topped the number of dogs doing the same. It is not surprising, really: They don't need to be walked, they house-train themselves, and they're darned good companions.

My first was Parker, the love child of a good friend's two cats. He moved with me to New York at the age of 10, few I do a pro for years, and finally got his little fiddle when I learned he'd been brooding and a stirring all the adjacent folks in Tribeca.

Then came Boomer, a giant good boy boy rescued from a hillside bar in Alabama. When he demanded a kitten, we got him Janice, who was born from when in the South Bronx.

After they left us, we brought home Sylvester and Tiger (pictured at right). They were the first cats we adopted ourselves, and they are grateful every day for being spared from New York City's Animal Care and Control (a.k.a. the pound). Both were owner wannabes, and Sylvester, in particular, looked so sad in his picture that it broke my heart.

Three years later, they're both happy as clams, and now we're giving the cats equal time in *This Old House*. On page 56, senior technical editor Mark Powers shares his low-to-build catnip—an outdoor structure that attaches to a window and allows your cats to safely relax within walking distance of nature. I'm guessing that your Sylvester and Tiger will be asking for one.

SUSAN RYLAND  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF  
@thisoldhouse.com



Cats of the castle: my first feline rescue, Sylvester (on front paws) and Tiger making themselves at home

PHOTO: GAIL HERRICK; CATS: GAIL HERRICK; ILLUSTRATION: MICHAEL HARRIS



#### How to reach us

If you're one of the editors of [TOH\\_letters@thisoldhouse.com](mailto:TOH_letters@thisoldhouse.com) or write to:  
The Old House magazine  
200 Nutter Drive  
Stamford, CT 06902

\* Include your full name, address, and phone number. Published letters are edited for clarity and length.

OUR SEPTEMBER 2016 ISSUE *caused quite a stir*, with readers' opinions split nearly down the middle. For every missive we received saying, "Enough paint already!" we got another that was brimming with paint ideas and color questions. It's a balancing act. We'll continue to bring you how-tos and helpful advice on renovation, restoration, and just plain old maintenance. But it's the finishing touches—like paint—that often give a project its particular character. Whether you're looking for carpentry or curb appeal, we want to make room for you in This Old House.

#### Bright idea

So you own the suspension I needed to redo my kitchen of 11 years '90s, with dark cabinets and stainless appliances. To enjoy the antique brass hardware that disappeared on the dark wood signs on the new signs. The cabinet man looks much higher and bigger! Thank you for your magazine and the new management it gives us. DEYMS.

—JUDY ORRILL, MAINE MAIL

#### Crafts and craftsmanship

I am disappointed in the lack of content of your latest issue. Most furniture, painted wood, overly decorated rooms with too many pillows, pillows, old customs, and techniques. I am surprised TOH has gone for the "crafty" trend rather than the quality craftsmanship you have always represented. There are so many magazines highlighting the latest bling things on floor, please don't turn TOH into just another one of these "beach salon" results!

—PATRICK LEONARD, MARYLAND  
WEST KINGSFORD, MD

#### Where are they now?

I thoroughly enjoy your magazine, and I particularly like reading the Story This Old House feature inside the back cover and the new history lessons 2-pagers. I am curious as to the outcome of some of the homes and would love to see an article going as far as to see these properties.

—PHILIP RUTH, ROSELAND

**THE EDITOR'S REPLY:** You're not alone in wondering about the fate of these houses. If you head to [thisoldhouse.com](http://thisoldhouse.com) and search "See This Old House update," you can learn more about many of them. The latest ones? The Oakbrook, WI, house from the July 2005 issue. The new owners begin working on it in May 2006. You can follow their progress online at [facebook.com/thisoldhouse](http://facebook.com/thisoldhouse).

INSIDER  
SPECIAL  
ADDITION

#### Creating a Colonial-style lamp post

—MARK E. WELLS, TOLEDO, OH

I'm enclosing pictures of the results of your "Upgrade a steel lamp post" project [Weekend Remodel, March 2006]. It took me longer than a weekend because I didn't have an existing pole also I guess because I'm 88 years old. I'm proud of the finished product. I think it looks great. I hope you agree. I love your magazine.

**THE EDITOR'S REPLY:** It was a treat to receive an actual paper letter and a real photograph, and we're delighted to agree—your post looks great! Thanks for sharing.



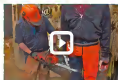
This Old House

## Need expert advice? TOH video to the rescue!

See the TOH crew in action!



> Hang a kitchen wall cabinet



> Practice chainsaw safety



> Install a rain gutter



> Maintain overgrown perennials

Find 1,000 more projects (really!) at  
[thisoldhouse.com/video](http://thisoldhouse.com/video)

# I didn't talk for a very long time

Josh Slocum  
diagnosed with autism

Stick of supports is a sign of autism. Lower the sticks and you're on your way.



# home solutions

Edited by Deborah Barbieri

INSIDE

LIGHT CONTROL

COLD-WEATHER PREP

CUNNING CLEANERS

MORE

## Build a safer fire

Begin with and end on a grate, seasoned firewood, kindling no thicker than your thumb, and a starter like crumpled or two-folded newspaper. Pop a wicker screen and keep the fire going by adding logs gradually, maintaining air channels. Never feed flames with gift wrap, pizza boxes, or other fast-burning trash. Let the ashes cool before removing them, and get regular chimney checkups—using a certified pro, of course.

Be back on us  
at winterfest  
and watch the  
game where  
your loved one

PHOTO: JAMES HARRIS FOR SHUTTERSTOCK



## How do I corral footwear at the front door?



Allison Blanton, an interior designer in San Francisco, believes you can corral the entry without—and shoe drop-off zone and still provide a warm welcome. Here, she explains how.

► **SIZE UP THE SPACE** You connect storage entrance to a small area as long as you have a wall to work with—one far enough away from the door to allow it to fully open, yet close enough that people can see to place their shoes there.

► **ADD FURNITURE OR A BUILT-IN** Built-ins are a great solution in tight spaces. Attach with a shoe rack like the built-in island can work—your new addition is a subtle nod to putting on shoes. Make sure the rack is hefty enough not to be knocked over. I prefer freestanding pieces—they tend to offer more shoe action.

► **KEEP IT TIDY** You don't have to completely hide shoes and boots to keep the space neat. Baskets and bins work well. Even a simple metal tray will help maximize visual clutter.

—CHARLOTTE BARNARD

## Bright ideas for LEDs

Every year brings a fresh crop of energy-saving bulbs—and fresh waves of panic in the lighting aisle, as you wonder which bulbs will flatter your paint scheme, not to mention your guests. We asked color and lighting experts for their advice.

I used to stockpile incandescents—I didn't like the impact of brightness on paint colors, and LEDs usually washed them out, too. But I've come around to the Cree Soft White (not Daylight—too harsh). It makes my color choices look spot on.

—ANETTE SPINNETT  
INTERIOR DECORATOR



Don't obsessive tonight. Cree Soft White A19 Compact LED Bulb, \$10.99 per set of four, four-pack only. Amazon.com, \$10.99 per set of four, four-pack only. Amazon.com, \$10.99 per set of four, four-pack only.



I love the new LED versions of the classic Edison bulb. I use them in the dining room, for ambience and glow. They don't throw off enough light to wash out the color schemes, and their yellowish cast helps create a mood.

—TOMMAGNANT TECH LIGHTING



For bedrooms or TV rooms, seek out bulbs that dim down to 1 percent, or other spaces. 30 percent may be fine. Some bulbs do too much—adjusting their color temperature so they get warmer (more orange) as the light level drops. Makes any glow dimmers are UL listed for LED bulbs, some even allow you to mix LED and non-LED bulbs on a single switch for personal upgrades.

—ETHAN BERN  
LUTION ELECTRONICS

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES



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## Giftable brushes

Dusting tools are abundant, with no shortage in the plastics division. But should you crave a highly focused tool as appealing as a wood toy, consider the range of fetching natural-hair brushes made by Bürstenhaus Redecker, a German company founded in 1935. Three of our favorites:



**Hedgehog crumb chaser**

Make the last person you saw crumpling the table saw working at Dowling Kirby. (It should be the neighbor kid, too. It'll be grateful to have this hedgehog and homehair hedgehog on hand.)

[BHB.burstenhaus.com](http://BHB.burstenhaus.com)

**Laptop debris remover**

Not that we'd ever eat potato chips over a keyboard, but to save you from someone who does, this double-sided goat-and-horse-hair comb brush is what to do.

[BHB.burstenhaus.com](http://BHB.burstenhaus.com)



**Houseplant polisher**

Whom you plant and how much a little TLC, comes in handy with this new brush with a double-sided tool. It's plant could talk, it would say "ahh."

[BHB.burstenhaus.com](http://BHB.burstenhaus.com)



## Send fresh air

Before you head to your workshop to knock out a few last-minute gifts, take a moment to think about air quality.

**If you're cutting wood...** When you use a table saw or a lathe, "you need eye protection and a mask," says Lauren Burton, an indoor air quality expert at the EPA. Fortunately, low-cost dust collection systems are available. To learn more, visit [www.dryvac.com](http://www.dryvac.com), which sells a wet/dry vac fitted with a HEPA filter.

**If you're sanding...** Vintage and reclaimed pieces offer character—and the possibility of lead paint. Use a home test kit for lead before refinishing, or keep lead from becoming airborne by sealing it. Even if your flea-market find is lead-free, protect your lungs from fine wood dust by using an orbital sander that has integrated dust collection.

**If you're gluing or sealing...** Solvents, sealers, and other common woodworking materials—not to mention paint—often throw off volatile organic compounds, or VOCs. Please read or control (read the warning labels, buy the safer option you can find, and use the smallest amount you can, suggests Burton). An air purifier with both a HEPA filter and an activated carbon filter can help. Be sure to follow vinyl solvents on filter replacement. —BATTY WOOD

PHOTO: JAMES HART/ISTOCK

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Advil

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Everyone deserves  
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\$3399\*

\*Based on a 30"x10" kitchen

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## Last but not least

The final project in a decade-long renovation, this master bath gets a dramatic update without moving any walls. BY NINA MALKIN • PHOTOGRAPHY BY DESIGNER WHITLAW LIEWELLYN

### PRIORITIZING PROJECTS

For a five-upper stay put, the master bath—the most private room in any house—on the back burner. Such was the case for Dayka Solomon, an Atlanta-based interior designer who spent the last decade renovating her 1985 Cape Cod-style home. “First, I tackled more people would actually see,” she says. “I used the guest bath for years!” When she got ready to work on the builder-grade master bath, Dayka wanted to keep the look consistent with the house’s overall decor—in graphic patterns and strong palette. Her budget was tight, though, so she took a high-low approach. She splurged on a deep tub, but skimped by putting the existing vanity instead of replacing it. And while she converted dead space into a closet, she otherwise kept the room’s footprint. Dayka added bold impact with a dramatic use of patterns for the wall tile and shower curtain, and a vintage gold-toned mirror above a glossy black vanity. “I love the way it turned out,” she says. “It reflects who I am. When I’m there, I feel joyful and relaxed.”

BEFORE Vinyl flooring and dated fixtures like the acrylic tub weren’t made for adults that were functional but dated.

AFTER: New patterns for both the tile and the shower curtain pop alongside walls. Bold accents lend warmth and glamour. The 16-inch-deep tub fits in the original shower. Tub: Roca. Tub: American Standard.



BEFORE

A rich, dark penny tile provides a graphic counterpoint to the herringbone pattern of 3- by 6-inch tiles and the classic wall. Tile: Zuffa



**homeowner tip**  
CRYSTAL GORDON  
ATLANTA

"Try a phobosy-weight fabric for a shower curtain. It's heavy, so it hangs well, it's easily dry-cleaned, too."

Black paint updates the existing wall. The new oak ladder-back vanity top costs less than \$100. "Just happened to be the right size," says Gordon. Brass and bone cabinet pulls play off the light and the brass. Bathroom shower & counter top: JG's Interiors. Anthropologie

**after**

The fixtures kept their locations in the 123-square-foot bath, while dead space was cut off beside the tub became a closet.



Group black-painted bent-holding repeats a decorative detail used elsewhere in the house to unify the decor. Tile: Mosaic

1. Left the original vanity in place, adding a 3-inch-deep vanity to a comfortable height.
2. Swapped out fixtures into original spots so no need to run new plumbing.
3. Put in a tub 2 inches wider than the previous one and in centered the tub.



4. Combined the new tub with the vanity for better clearance around door swing.
5. Filled the wall between the vanity area and the tub to maintain privacy.
6. Tipped dead space to create a closet for a clothes hamper and luggage.

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**Breakfast nook for \$418**

A hands-on homeowner opens up a dark, paneled dining space with a built-in banquette and lots of white paint. BY KATHY HALL



**ALFORD** The small dining room off the gallery kitchen was the only space for informal meals but it could barely seat two comfortably.

**AFTER** Funding the global painting made the room ten bigger, and customizing it earned the Traffic Box

**▲ A CUMLEY KITCHEN** means your dining space is more critical than ever. In Eric and Rick Nally's Pittsburgh home, the breakfast nook off the kitchen was a much-needed space for casual meals, but it barely ticked enough to fit their family. To keep up the room, they opted to paint the wood paneling. After deglazing, sanding, and cleaning the walls, they left them dry for 24 hours before priming and painting them white. Since it was difficult to move chairs in and out around their existing dining table without blocking traffic, the couple built a custom banquette to maximize space. Its padded top and white storage benches and joined them with a "P" piece made from pine, oak, and plywood. She anchored the banquette to the wall and tapped it with a sheet of MDF, primed white to match, and cushions the reveal from a custom dog cloth. These and Rick put together a round table and six uppers to separate the space they already owned. A family-friendly member seated the couple's preteen lady, and Eric filled the space with art projects and accessories, plus a table-topped island they moved to sit in a nook when the new breakfast nook is only the most popular in the room: dining. "It was like having a sister kitchen," says his life for "Eric and Rick." "It's a huge effort!"

## THE PROJECT TALLY

Close the walls from  
both ends of whole  
column and solid... **\$60**

Created a bangoride by joining two ready-made slatwbenches with pine 2x4s and plywood, then topped it with MDF. **\$108**

Made cushions for the canopée by covering pieces of 4-inch muslin with a coarse drop cloth. **\$40**

Joseph and his little boys  
and girls. They playfully  
quarrelled in every corner  
of the hall but the  
square hall. **30**

Useful marble-topped island from their previous kitchen is upcycled... **\$50**

Replaced the stained glass, pub style light with a more modern pendant **\$70**

Accessories include a table lamp, three pillows, and wall art from other rooms. A game boy, Craggall, built new built-in desk. **\$139**

**TOTAL \$418**



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## Frame your words in style

Chalkboard is handy when you have something to say—add bends of gold and you have a work of art. BY DEBORAH BALDWIN • PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW MCGALE

WHILE THE ORIGINS of chalkboard paint are something of a mystery—or so a quick online search suggests—one thing is clear: Adults as well as kids love creating everything from a lockupdash to a flower pot as a writing surface. Today, you can find chalkboard paint in classic shades of black and green ([masonium.com](http://masonium.com)) and in vibrant colors like blue, green, even pink ([shopspare.net](http://shopspare.net)), making this unique finish one of the fastest, easiest ways to add an unexpected, perhaps whimsical, touch to a space.

Take a look at what we did here, in the dining room of a 19th-century rowhouse getting ready for the holidays. Instead of simply painting a chalkboard accent wall, we opted for a more formal treatment by adding a gold frame that can toast the occasion, even better, a few conversational words of wisdom.

After priming the wall and rolling on a chalkboard base coat (Culpepper's Noisless, \$28 per quart; [homedepot.com](http://homedepot.com)), we "dressed" a frame over the existing whiteboard—sketching it out first with chalk, of course. An inner border, suggesting depth, gives it added dimension, and a further sideboard still life completes the picture.

For the step-by-step, read on.



### STEP-BY-STEP



**1) Measure and mark the frame's top and bottom** using chalk and a yardstick to center it over a sideboard or another piece of furniture. Our frame is about 3 1/2 by 4 feet. The scale and paper lines can be adjusted to fit your space.



**2) Mark the frame's sides** using a level to ensure the frame is square. We used the width of the yardstick to establish the thickness (1 1/4 inches). Then outlined the inside borders of the frame.



**3) Create a scalloped corner** with the help of a quart-size paint can. We started and ended ours 4 inches in from the outside corner, using the can as a guide for drawing the inside curve. Then move the can 1/4 inches out, as shown, and repeat twice the 90-degree corner marks.



**4) To create the inner frame**, repeat Steps 1 and 2, starting about 1/2 inch in from the outer frame. We used a 1/8-inch-wide strip of string material as a guide for the thickness of the inner frame.



**5) Outline the outer and inner borders of both frames** with a metallic paintpen. We used a Sharpie gold paint marker (\$9.75 for two; [homedepot.com](http://homedepot.com)).



**6) Fill in the frames.** We used an artist's brush and Ralph Lauren's burnished gold metallic specialty finish paint (\$22 per quart; [homedepot.com](http://homedepot.com)). While waiting for the paint to dry, find an apt quotation—7 seconds it even is! Google it, there's always Google. ■

PHOTO: ANDREW MCGALE; STYLING: JENNIFER HARRIS/ANDREW MCGALE

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• shopping

## Articulating library lights

Use hardworking sconces to illuminate a reading nook, sink wall, fireplace mantel, or any other place you want to brighten in style.

BY KATE WOOD • PHOTOGRAPHY BY WENDY T. WEBER

WALL-BRUNG adjustable sconce lights date to the 1930s, when certain luminaires kept needed to swing clear of thermable kowals. Once electricity became widespread in the early 20th century, there was a push for more efficient lighting at work and at home, in order to improve. Manually embellished fixtures with long arms, multiple locking joints, and directional metal shades became popular to spotlight all manner of work areas. These included kitchens, as well as living rooms, which one scholar noted had eventually become libraries by 1930, due to "the reading habit of so-day." Contemporary library lamps do these period precursors one better, with shower heads, distance details, and playful proportions. Here, 11 spot-on options.



**1> high polish**  
MARTIN GARDNER  
Made of Steel  
Shade: 10 1/2" x 4 1/4"  
Highlights: A shiny  
metal finish gives the  
open shade a classic  
look. \$200,  
[martingardner.com](http://www.martingardner.com)

**2> pretty penny**  
MARTIN GARDNER  
Made of Aluminum  
Shade: 10 1/2" x 4 1/4"  
Highlights: The design  
line and rich appearance  
of the brass 10 1/2" have a  
surprising affordable  
price. \$150, [martingardner.com](http://www.martingardner.com)



**3» free-range illumination**  
Made of brass and glass  
Shade: 7 1/2" x 4 1/2"  
Highlights: The lantern adjusts side to side as well as up and down. Its glass shade also rotates 360 degrees.  
\$140, [rejuvena.com](http://rejuvena.com)



**4» night light**  
TIGHT KUTIN DESIGN  
Made of brass  
Shade: 5 1/2" x 3 1/4"  
Highlights: Its small size and battery switch make the plug-in lamp a bedside read bet.  
\$20, [diorama.com](http://diorama.com)

**5» high-style visual comfort**  
RESTORATION HARDWARE  
Made of brass  
Shade: 7 1/2" x 3 1/4"  
Highlights: The elegant design brings science to antiquities; it comes with a generous 10-foot, 14-foot, or 20-foot cord.



**6» silvery beauty**  
RESTORATION HARDWARE  
Made of chrome  
Shade: 7 1/2" x 3 1/4"  
Highlights: The polished chrome finish is a modern twist on the classic style.  
\$140, [rejuvena.com](http://rejuvena.com)



**7» small wonder**  
REX  
Made of steel and glass  
Shade: 5 1/2" x 4 1/2"  
Highlights: Mount the powder-coated lamp using its bracket, or take it off and plug the lamp in place.  
\$65, [rex.com](http://rex.com)



**8» bright white**  
HUGO BOSS  
Made of steel  
Shade: 10 1/2" x 7 1/2"  
Highlights: The minimalist design is a classic, yet modern, twist on the classic style.  
\$140, [rejuvena.com](http://rejuvena.com)



**9» industrial chic**  
ARTISAN LIGHTING  
Made of steel  
Shade: 5 1/2" x 3 1/4"  
Highlights: Brass accents and the addition of a Edison bulb brighten the look.  
\$120, [artisanlighting.com](http://artisanlighting.com)



**10» shining star**  
ARTISAN LIGHTING  
Made of steel  
Shade: 5 1/2" x 3 1/4"  
Highlights: A shiny polished nickel finish makes the classic design a nice fit for a modern home.  
\$120, [artisanlighting.com](http://artisanlighting.com)



**11» light reading**  
TIGHT KUTIN DESIGN  
Made of brass  
Shade: 8 1/2" x 4 1/2"  
Highlights: With its side-on light, the crafted lamp is a perfect choice for a reading nook.  
\$140, [diorama.com](http://diorama.com)



## Restoring a butcher-block countertop

When wood counters lose their good looks, here's how to make them beautiful again, and keep them looking that way

BY THOMAS RAEER • PHOTOGRAPHS BY KOLIN SMITH

COST: About \$35  
TIME: 2 hours,  
not including  
drying time  
DIFFICULTY: Easy



An oxygen bleach solution will remove tough stains and discoloration. A nitrile glove protects exposed skin.

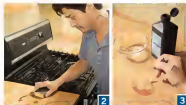
### TOOLBOX

- oxygen bleach
- nitrile glove
- scrub brush with wire springs
- 60-grit sandpaper
- hydrogen peroxide
- cotton cloth
- microfiber cloth
- sand-on sand number
- 300- and 650-grit sandpaper for sander
- staining wax
- 5-in-1 tool
- borax and mineral oil wood conditioner
- lat-free cotton cloths



### SAFE FINISHES

In hardwood kitchens, food-safe oils and waxes are ideal finishes for butcher block because they're easy to wipe on and let the wood part shine. But wait for the bleaching cure. Minerals in borax and soda are available, but don't use long. Bleach of borax and soda mineral oil like Howard's Butcher Block Conditioner. Howard's products come in a lovely scent, a bit of sheen, and better water resistance than mineral oil alone. Show don't tell: Mineral oil and waxing oils like mineral oil which turn rancid. Also avoid finishes like varnish and polyurethane. They're hard films are difficult to refinish when they chip, peel, or get scratched.



### STEP-BY-STEP

**1) Bleach out old stains.** Stir a teaspoon of powder hydrogen bleach (sodium percarbonate) into a cup of hot water until it dissolves. Wear a nitrile glove. Dip a stiff nylon bristle scrub brush into the solution and scrub the wood for a couple of minutes. Rinsing is needed to keep the surface wet. The mix will foam slightly, then subside. Wait 20 minutes for the bleach to work, then rinse thoroughly with a sponge and cold water. The wood will lighten as it dries, but it's still stained. Mix up a new batch of bleach and repeat the scrubbing process.

**2) Sand down stains, little by little.** Use a coarse, 60-grit sandpaper or sanding sponge to remove the discolored wood, but don't try to get rid of it entirely. Sanding too much makes spot hollows like a dip. It's easy to sand across the grain initially, but be sure your final strokes follow the grain.

**3) Dissolve wax stains.** Pour fresh hydrogen peroxide (3 percent solution) into a bowl. Use a cotton swab to dab the peroxide only on the stain. It can lighten unfinished wood. Let the solution sit for a couple of minutes, then wipe with a damp microfiber cloth. Repeat until the stain disappears, or rinses off. Let it dry.

**4) Seal.** Once the countertop is dry and the stains are mostly gone, sand the entire surface. Start in 60-800-grit paper, which should eliminate any remaining marks, then finish with 150. The best tool for the purpose is a 5-in-1 tool and sandpaper. Guide the sander, overlapping passes going with the wood grain.

**5) Fill cracks.** After sanding, mix in a few drops of oil. Then carefully pour the liquid into cracks or imperfections. When the wax has solidified, use a soft scrape off the excess with a 5-in-1 tool.

**6) Seal.** Pour a new coat of finish like Butcher Block Conditioner onto the wood and rub it back and forth with a lint-free cloth. Let 20 minutes, then buff with a clean cotton cloth. To maintain the countertop's stain resistance, reapply whenever the wood looks dry.

## A historic home gets truly grand

Beefy trim, a stately front porch, and additional windows patch up the evidence of previous renovations on a turn-of-the-century schoolhouse

BY KATE WOOD • ILLUSTRATION BY BRAYGATE INC.



Roof joists over the windows suggest it's time to help break up the formerly long facade.

**COVERED PORCH** has been on Pat and Danielle Ruge's wish list for the decade they've owned this Naperville, Indiana, home, but just have to wait for the exterior had them jumped. The concrete block siding was no longer available, and gaps showed due to the 1990 home's prior conversion from one room schoolhouse to church to residence. We turned to Brad Schuch of Midman Architect Architects for help.

His first change: Demolish a side porch roof and create a wide front porch that ties the front and back portions of the house together. Because-colored window cladding and wide white-trim would "bring the block siding to life," he adds. Adding double doors because even more welcoming thanks to a water fall staircase and an arched, gabled roof detail. Says Pat, "We wish we could start construction today!" ■

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### finishing touches

Silver and bronze metalwork and other hardware accents show off the concrete-brick siding to best advantage



#### porch roof

A silver standing seam metal porch roof adds curb appeal and suits the home's rural setting. Snap-On products, from \$20 per sq. ft. to \$100 per sq. ft. (see [www.snap-on.com](http://www.snap-on.com)) for details.



#### paint

Brick trim brightens the exterior and covers gaps in the siding; white red doors give the entry a bit of color. Cabot's Brick and More (see [www.cabotsofcolor.com](http://www.cabotsofcolor.com)) for details.



#### window

An east window where a schoolhouse first angle, here being a double door. ARS CO. (see [www.arsco.com](http://www.arsco.com)) for details.



#### entry lights

Striking fully placed, square entrance in the depth of the porch and allows the family to enjoy it after sunset. (see [www.arsco.com](http://www.arsco.com)) for details.

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## Build a catio

Use basic cedar lumber to create a screened-in patio space that gives cats a breath of fresh air while keeping them close to home. BY SAI VASUCLA • PHOTOGRAPHS BY COLIN SMITH



**DIFFICULTY** Moderate  
The castparts are building the house, and screenwriter **Wesley** is a piece of a puzzle.

**LIKE ALL PETS,** cats benefit from a little exercise. Don't worry, we're not suggesting you take yours for a walk on a leash. Instead, build your feline friend a somewhat strenuous chair hangs from a window. A cove, accessed through the open window, lets cats enjoy fresh air, sunshine, and bird watching without the chance of getting onto the roof. Senior technical editor Mark Peters built this two-story version, complete with a shelf for peeing, over two days using rot-resistant cedar, a 6-foot ladder, and a color that matches the house's exterior. Follow along to learn how to create a feline chair that's sure to get you cat to come and rove behind the couch.

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## TERMS

- hammer
- pencil
- tape measure
- steel roller
- plasterboard
- mallet saw
- drill/driver
- jigsaw
- stapler
- utility knife
- toe caps
- double gun
- electrical saw
- trowel
- chisel
- level
- stamps
- 1/2 inch  
padding felt

## INTERLUDE

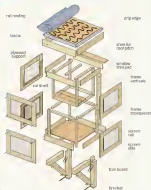
- 2x4 western red cedar balustrade
- 4x25mm x 1 footers
- 3x6 stainless steel or treated boards
- 4x25mm x 6 footers
- 16 nails around perimeter
- 2x4x8 for top 1 foot boards
- 4x4 posts, treated pine
- 4x25mm boards
- 3/8-inch stainless steel screws
- 25x25mm stainless steel screws
- 2x4 inch pine screws for accents
- 3 inch deck screws
- 6 nails threaded into posts 2x4s
- 4x2 inch stringer
- 4x4 treated window screening
- Get gates 3 by 7 footboards
- aluminum deck edge
- Get over 3x3 boards
- Roll over
- Get over 1 by 3x3 foot rail
- stringer
- 4x2 inch ladder stringer
- 1x6x6 aluminum
- carbon steel welding primer
- carbon steel primer
- wood glue
- stainless steel fastener
- roof cement, Get two-thirds

Find a suitable location for the project at <http://www.mhhe.com/comp>

### DAY-TO-DAY TIMELINE

**SATURDAY** Would the decrease (Items 3-4)?

**Step 6** Attach the cable to the window (Steps 5–7)



## 1 Measure the parts

**A) Make a sashy sash.** To determine the height of the sash, mark the location of the windowsill and the head casing or a long board. Then measure the width from the outside edges of the side casings. Each of the two casings frames is about as tall as the window sashes and wide enough to rest on the side casings.

**■ Cut the parts** Cut all the cedar 2x2 balusters and 1x4 boards for the project with the laminating glue and primer. Once dry, cut the parts for the rail to fit and sand window screens with orbital sander. Use tape drill to the cut for

## 2 Build the catio frames

**A) Make the sides** Using 2x2s, built joints, and 2x4 bracing, steel screws, attach a frame crosspiece between two verticals, making a U-shape, as shown. At the open end of the U, attach a 2x2 plywood support on top of the verticals. Repeat this step to make the three remaining sides, and cut any overly exposed ends with a saw.

**B) Add the trim boards** Using 1½-inch stainless-steel screws, attach ¼x4 trim boards to the 2x2 sides, opposite the plywood supports. Stand the side frame's up-side edge and join them with front and back ¼x4 trim boards. Drive screws through the trim boards and into the 2x2 verticals, as shown. Center an additional plywood support between the front and back trim boards. Repeat the process on the other frame.

**C) Fasten upper crosspieces** To complete the frame, join the sides together at the top by screwing on 2x2s. Drive ½-inch fasteners through the top of the verticals and into the ends of the 2x2 crosspieces. Repeat the process on the other frame.

**D) Make the door** Measure the interior dimensions of a frame and cut a sheet of plywood to fit. Trace a 2x2 onto each corner of the plywood and cut notches with a saw. Test the fit, as shown. Then remove the plywood, glue in the bottom side, and call back to install once the catamaras are insulated on the inside.



**TIP** To avoid splitting the screen frame, drill pilot holes into the edges of the 1x4s before joining them with screws.



## 3 Make the screens

**A) Build the frames** For each screen frame, glue a 1x4 board with the rails between the sides. Glue them together. Drill a pilot hole at an angle through the outside edge of a rail and into the adjoining side, then drive a 2½-inch trim screw. Repeat at the remaining outside corners. Stand the frame up, drill an angled pilot hole through the rail and into the side wall, as shown, at each inside corner, and follow with a screw.

**B) Stretch the screens** Cut an oversized piece of screening. Staple the screening to each of the six frames in the order, from front to back, and any staples before blocking. Set the block, 3 to 6 inches, and secure screening around the frame. Cut any material that overhangs with a utility knife.

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## 4 Add a flat roof

**A) Assemble the roof:** Use 1 1/2-inch screws to join three lengths of fascia together with butt joints, creating an L-shape. Then add glue to the top of the fascia boards, place the plywood roof as shown, and attach it with more screws. Cut three lengths of aluminum drip edge to size with hand shears, then roll a bead of roofing cement around the edge of the plywood, embed the front drip edge, and attach it with 1 1/2-inch screws. Next, add the side drip edge the same way, overlapping the front.

**B) Attach the roof:** Position the upper frame with the front boards facing up. To shed water, pitch the roof forward by spacing a support leg that's 1/4 inch up at the frame's upper plywood supports flush with the rear trim board. Center the roof on the frame, flush with the back. Drive screws through the roof and into the upper plywood supports, as shown.

**C) Unroll the roofing:** Spread roofing cement on the plywood, then unroll the roll roofing and use wet adhesive, pressing it in place. Turn the asphalt to width joint just covers the aluminum drip cap.

**TIP** Take your time unrolling the roofing into the wet adhesive to avoid readjusting.



## 5 Make the brackets

**A) Cut the half lap joints:** We set our circular saw to a 45° angle and trimmed 1 1/2 inches off all six faces to form decorative corners on the ends of the brackets. All the square ends use a circular saw to make a series of passes (3/4-inch wide and 1 1/4 inches deep). Knock the slivers free with a hammer and chisel, as shown. Repeat for the second bracket.

**B) Build the bracket:** Add construction adhesive to each side of the half lap joint and then it together with a pair of 3-inch deck screws. Position the diagonal brace in place and drive 1/2-inch deck screws through the mitered ends and into the bracket. Repeat on the second bracket. Coat the exposed ends with primer.



## House blueprint

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## 6 Assemble the catio

**A) Attach the brackets:** Position a bracket underneath the window sill. Drill a shallow 1/8-inch pilot hole through the lower leg for the buttons that hold the screwheads. Then attach the bracket to the house with a 9-inch structural screw as shown. Check for plumb with a level, then tie screw through both sides of the bracket's ball, lay out and into the house with two more structural screws. Repeat to attach the second bracket.

**B) Join the frames:** With a helper, stack and center the catio frames on the brackets. Clamp the frames together, then brace through the crosspieces of the upper frame into the lower one with 2 1/2-inch screws every 30 inches, but don't seat them fully just yet. Use 2 1/2-inch screws to attach 2x4s to the back edges of the joined frame, between the trim boards to pad out the window casing. Drive 3-inch deck screws through the lower frame's plywood supports and into the brackets. Add the floor and screw it to the supports.

**C) Connect the frame to the house:** Using a level, check that the catio frame is plumb and level. Measure for a corner fastener between the upper and lower trim boards, where the screen frames will fit. Adjust for rocking by adding shims between the catio frames before tightening the screws, holding them together. Attach the cat shutters to the lower crosspieces of the upper frame with 2 1/2-inch screws. Then attach the frame to the house by driving 3-inch deck screws through the 2x4s and into the window frame every 16 inches.



## 7 Install the screens

**A) Tip to the side panels:** Using a 1/4-inch paddle bit, drill shallow pilot holes for button plugs and corners of a screen panel. Put the screen in place, mesh facing inside, with the front edge flush to the outside corner of the cat frame.

**B) Screw screens in place:** Drive the four screws, holding each panel in place. Press in the plugs. Repeat the install for the screen on the other side of the catio and then the front, now cool everything with tan!

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# ask **This Old House**

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Tips, tricks, and  
answers to your home-  
improvement  
questions

**Q** Now that I've got a  
woodstove, I'd like to  
split firewood by  
hand. Any pointers?

—JERRY SAUNDERS, ENTHWISTHAM, CT

**A** A maul works great for splitting  
smaller logs, but you'll need a  
sledgehammer and a wedge,  
like the ones at left, to split the  
big stuff. Just be sure to wear  
safety glasses to keep splinters  
out of your eyes, heavy boots  
to shield your feet, and ear  
plugs or muffs to protect your  
hearing. And if a wedge head is  
mushroomed, like these are,  
take a moment to grind off the  
overhanging metal. Otherwise,  
sharp metal shards can break  
off and shoot out like bullets  
each time you strike the wedge.

—THE EDITORS



PHOTOGRAPH BY VICTOR SCHLAGER

Our cast  
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Host

The Lally column in my detached garage is rusting, and its concrete base is crumbling. Can I replace it, or is that beyond the scope of a homeowner? —KIMBERLY KIRK, BETHESDA, MD



Your host checks a Lally column supporting a steel beam. It's essential that the column be found and red on a solid concrete footing.

**TOM DAVIS REPLIES:** I don't think the work will be too difficult, but you may want to get some help figuring out what needs to be done. With all the variables to be considered, you should have an inspector, engineer, or experienced contractor assess your situation and the steps required to fix it before you tackle the job.

That area will be especially important if there are cracks in the base or in the slab around the column. A crumbling base may need only a concrete fix, but a cracked slab is an indication that the footing is inadequate or nonexistent and that a new one needs to be poured. Since you don't know any cracks, it's likely that you will either need a proper footing, making this a much larger job.

Here's a general overview of what should be done, assuming you have a basic, single-story garage with a single Lally column supporting a beam that runs the entire width of the space.

Before you can begin, the beam will need temporary support. For a single beam, a couple of 2x6s nailed together and a hydraulic bottle jack placed a couple of feet from the post will be sufficient. If there are two beams that overlap at the post, then make sure each one has a temporary support on

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other side of the post. Place a steel Lolly plate on top of the bottle jack, wedge the 2x6s on the plate, then hold them in place by jacking them up against the underside of the beam. Check that the 2x6s are plumb. Now adjust the plate covering the column to the beam, gently jack the support up just enough to relieve the weight on the column, and a fraction of an inch from the base. Store the old column so that you can cut the new one to the same length.

You could install another green-filled steel column, but a pressure-treated 6x6 post might be a better option because it's easier to cut and won't rust. You'll anchor it to the concrete with a galvanized-steel post base held in place with expansion bolts, and fasten it to a metal post cap with structural screws. All this hardware is made by Simpson Strong-Tie (simpsonstrongtie.com).

Use a 4-foot level to make sure the post is plumb before lowering the temporary support and fastening the cap to the beam with more structural screws.

#### Buckled flooring

We replaced our carpeted floors with beautiful engineered hickory flooring, which a contractor glued to the concrete slab with a moisture-barrier glue. When the carpet was pulled up, both it and the slab were clean—no mold or wet areas—but two months later, the new flooring started to buckle and creak. Nobody seems to know what's causing this. Any ideas?

—JESSIE CLAUDE, BAYTON, LOUISIANA

#### What is it?

- Rotary sprinker head
- Drainpipe cover
- Tiling tumbler
- Circle-cutting jig

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**KEVIN O'CONNOR REPLIES** I asked wood flooring contractor Pat Hwang, who has worked on many *The Old House* TV projects, to weigh in on your problem.

Here's what he had to say:

"In my experience, this sort of buckling can almost always be traced to moisture coming up through the concrete. Wood flooring swells when it absorbs that moisture, and if it can't move laterally, it buckles. Engineered wood flooring is much more stable than solid wood, which is why it's often used over concrete, but its glued veneers aren't immune to swelling and shrinking as the humidity changes.

"Although you had no apparent signs of moisture on your concrete slab, that doesn't mean it was dry two months later. Water vapor could have been coming through at a rate high enough to penetrate the adhesive and reach the wood. There are tests that can verify the moisture

level of concrete before flooring is installed, but they only give you a snapshot of conditions at that time. If water migrates beneath the slab during periods of heavy rain, like the one you've had recently in your area, moisture levels in the concrete can increase dramatically.

"That's why I cover glue wood floors directly to slab-on-grade as below-grade concrete, even with a moisture-vapor barrier. It's just one-silly. In those locations, I'll install a floating floor, in which the planks and strips are glued or locked edge-to-edge and not attached to a substrate. There's less chance for them to buckle that way.

"To lay a floating floor, the existing floor will have to be pulled up and the adhesive scraped off the slabs. Then the concrete should be covered with a 6-mil plastic vapor barrier, taped at all seams, and followed by a thin foam underlayment, also taped to stop moisture from getting through.

"Also, make sure the new flooring is taken out of its boxes and given time to acclimate to its



A pencil shows how this glued floor buckled when moisture penetrated the concrete slab.

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surroundings. If you go with luxury again, be especially patient during this stage. Like other very dense woods, luxury is slow to let or take up moisture, and moves unpredictably when it does.

"As the new flooring is installed, be sure there's a gap of at least 1/4 inch between it and the walls around the room. Without that gap, the floor may find itself with nowhere to move as it expands, and it will likely buckle again."

#### Noisy ducts

Our oil-burning furnace heats up the house nicely, but after it shuts off, the ducts in the basement make such loud clacking and knocking sounds

that we can't sleep. How do we put an end to the noise?

—SANDRA D'AMICO, LYNNWOOD, IL

**RICHARD TRETNEY REPLIES:** It's no secret that these metal ducts expand when they get hot and shrink when they cool. There's nothing to stop that from happening. But the noises you describe are another story. They're probably being caused by the metal rubbing against the wood framing or otherwise being restrained from moving in various points. Those sharp points can be polished and muffled to quiet your awkward symphony.

Go to the basement where the ducts are exposed; look for any spots where they're touching wood,



Wrapping foil-faced fiberglass insulation around metal ducts helps muffle the noise made when the metal expands and contracts.

and listen for squeaks. Where you pinpoint the noise, insert rubber pads to keep the two materials separate. That alone should muffle down a lot of the cacophony you're hearing.

Next, wrap the ducts in 3-6 inch-thick fiberglass—sold as duct wrap—to help keep them from heating up the neighboring pipes and so muffle vibrations in areas you can't reach. When you're done, you might find your house warms more quickly, as less heat

will be lost through the duct walls. As a side note, the same strategy of isolating and insulating works for any hot-water supply pipes.

Finally, have a licensed HVAC specialist check where the main supply duct connects to the furnace. There should be a flexible expansion joint collar in that location to isolate the duct from noise generated by the furnace blower and to absorb duct movement. If there is no collar, have one installed. Also, ask the specialist to check that the blower is sized correctly. You don't want one that pushes more air than your ducts are designed to handle.

It's a good thing that you aren't losing sleep due to noises from the ducts in your walls. Fixing them

would require taking back the drywall and insulating spaces and insulation where necessary. Wrapping wrapage might be an easier solution!

#### How to retire a chimney

Our old, unlined chimney is no longer safe to use. I would like to seal the top, to keep critters and debris out, and stuff insulation into the lower flue opening. Will that approach work, or would it create other problems?

—PENNY DORTCH, BATAVIA, OH

**KRYN O'DONNOR REPLIES:** This is a good question for Mark Schulz, a chimney and fireplace expert



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## HOW TO BUILD A FIRE PIT



A built-in fire pit is the perfect place to gather with friends and family and roast marshmallows on a cool evening. So why not build your own ring of fire this fall?

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For step-by-step instructions, go to [thisoldhouse.com/project](http://thisoldhouse.com/project)

who has worked on a number of The Old House TV projects. Here's what he had to say:

"A chimney needs to be able to breathe, even after it cures in concrete. It's okay to seal one end of the flue, either the top or the bottom, but sealing both ends will trap moisture inside and hasten the chimney's deterioration.

"Your approach will depend on the location of the damper. If it's at the chimney's lower end, near the fireplace, stuff insulation above the damper area to keep warm air from being lost up the flue. I'd recommend a mineral wool insulation such as Mineral Wool Coats, because it's hydrophobic and can dry out if it ever gets wet. Also, make sure there's a chimney cap with mesh screening at the top of the flue to keep out rain, as well as leaves and cats. A stainless steel cap is the best option—it will last longer and won't leave rust stains like one made of galvanized steel.

"If the chimney has a damper at the top, close it tightly and leave the rest of the chimney open down to the fireplace.

"Now, when you have a woodstove connected to your chimney instead of a fireplace, fill the double—the hole where the stove's flue goes into the wall and connects to the chimney—with mortar and some pieces of brick.

"Follow these steps and the chimney will still be there for the next several winters and put to use, if it's chosen."

### Gardening tool repair

I've inherited a lot of older gardening tools that have lost the pins holding the handle to the tool's head. I've tried taping it in place, but that's not so loose. Inserting a nail seems dangerous. What do you suggest?

—DEBBANETTE ENDRECHT MD

**ROGER GOOD REPULKS:** Wires and nails aren't going to do it. Here's a better way

to reconnect the heads and handles of your gardening tools.

First, clean out the metal socket or collar of the tool head and lightly sand the tapered end of the wood handle to make sure the fit between collar and handle is snug. When it isn't, shape the collar has opened up. Squeeze it back into shape with a vice, pliers, or a few taps with a hammer. If the handle is still loose, pull out its end with some construction adhesive.

Now line up the hole in the handle with the rivet holes on the collar, then hit the opposite end of the handle on the ground. This will drive the tool head down right onto the handle. If you're really lucky, the hole in the handle will align with the rivet holes and you can insert a No. 10 stainless-steel carriage bolt as much longer than the diameter of the collar. If not, you'll have to drill a new hole through the handle using the rivet holes as your guide, and insert the carriage bolt. In either case, you may need to enlarge one rivet hole slightly with a drill so that the small square shoulder beneath the head of the bolt sits right in the collar and prevents the bolt from spinning.

Place a washer over the bolt's threaded end, then thread on and tighten a nut. Lock it down with an additional nut engaged right with a wrench. Finally, cut off the bolt's protruding end using a grinder or a hacksaw, and file the cut end flush with the locknut. Your rakes, shovels, and hoes should be in good as new, if not better.

### ASK THIS OLD HOUSE

Go to [thisoldhouse.com/askthoh](http://thisoldhouse.com/askthoh) or write to Ask This Old House, The Old House Magazine, 252 Harbor Drive, Stamford, CT 06902.

Include a complete address and phone or fax number. Published questions will be edited for clarity and length. Answers for construction-related questions will appear in the December or January issue of the magazine or on our website at [www.thisoldhouse.com](http://www.thisoldhouse.com).

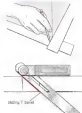


## Norm's tricks of the trade

The corners in my house aren't square. How can I make accurate outside-corner miter cuts in quarter-round baseboard trim?

—ALAN HUBMAN, MAHOMET MA

**A** To cut a 45-degree miter, you need to find the angle formed by an outside corner where there is a simple way to do that using strips of posterboard and a sliding T-bevel. This technique also comes in handy with other kinds of trim, including crown molding. In that case, hold the strips in place in the setting with double-sided mounting tape.



**1) Overlay the strips:** Cut two 24-inch-long pieces of posterboard or strips, exactly the same width, about 2 inches across. Place one against each side of the wall, with their ends overlapping at the corner. Mark two parallel lines on each side of the posterboard, as shown, using the edges of the tape strips as guides.

**2) Find the miter angle:** Take the bottom strip and draw a line from the point on the edge that touched the wall to the point diagonally across from it on the strip's opposite edge. That diagonal line shows the angle of the cut. Find the handle of a sliding T-bevel against one edge of the strip and line up its blade with the diagonal, as shown.

**3) Set the saw blade:** Place the handle of the T-bevel against the miter saw's fence and pivot the blade until its teeth touch the T-bevel, as shown. Hold the angle on the miter saw's switchplate against the blade at the same angle for right- and left-hand cuts. When the measurements come together, they'll make a perfect 45-degree joint. ■

PHOTO: MARCO L. FERRARI; ILLUSTRATION: NATHAN WATTS

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## NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

It's time to move indoors now and get ready for the onslaught of friends and family. Time to think about all the things we're thankful for—a sturdy roof over our heads, a warm home, and good company.

# Salvaged Beauty

A creative couple with a flea-market habit reinvent their 1800s house with an eclectic mix of vintage finds

by Deborah Baldwin  
photographs by William Geddes  
produced by Tisha Laung  
styling by Jennifer Wreeland McDermott



ARON, KIM, and Tracey Barlow with kids Noah, 12, and Piper, 8, enjoy some rare porchtime with their 85-pound cockieles, Murray (left) and Jacques (right). The couple finished their new bedroom in rustic, industrial style. The brass are reclaimed wood, the floor cassette, the best cashmere deep, and the crib both one of a kind. (Couch and table: Restoration Hardware; Chandelier: Day.)





## If politicians can

yearn for an idyllic past, when America was the land of smoky factories, twenty loaves, and hard-labor farms, what's to stop the rest of us? Ask any trend-watcher: In these fast-paced, tech-heavy times, few things quicker to the pulse of a consumer like beating bare wood, three-inch Edison bulbs, and rusty-iron anything.

Tracey Berkower and her husband, Rod, have been ahead of the scene since the late 1990s, when both were working at Restoration Hardware. Rod was "in general visual manager," a pioneer in the sorting of things for sale. Known in the business as merchandising, the placing of products in transporting settings—picture Ralph Lauren jodhpurs thrown over a Chesterfield sofa—generates warm feelings conducive to buying and is a hard sell for most people to master at playing the flute.

"I also worked at Anthropologie," says Tracey, referring to another retailer known for its merchandising, "and we both gravitated toward the same look, which is very rare—so many times a husband and wife don't have the same design sense."

Jump forward 19 years and over the couple's real-life home, where their scene-setting skills are on full display. The living room may be new, but you'd never guess it from looking at the simple fireplace, framed by contrasting iron-made scones and set off by a giant, round vintage laundry caddy serving as

ABOVE: The homeowners grafted on addition onto a pre-1940 first house—the original structure is gone when the French doors begin. A new-uprenovated porch makes the whole outside look as if it's always been there. *Styling: James Hargre. French doors: Anderson Windows*

RIGHT: The resulting kitchen gave up cabinet doors in white-painted a cutting board in a pre-style flavor. Ironed provide counter tops and a subway tile backsplash.

OPPOSITE: Light streams into the kitchen through a new French door and milk-frog panels. To the ceiling, a light, a spoon-looking woodpile and basket of potted plants, and a brace of potted plants. The kitchen's new look is a mix of old and new. The French door keeps the kitchen's look. The French door keeps the kitchen's look.





## Floor Plans

This renovation includes a full-story addition that more than doubled the size of the house. In a total of 3,400 square feet of living space, the porch is now no. 1 in the nation's flooring abstracts. The homeowners called out making structural changes in the existing house, which includes a narrow modified by its former owner.



a more rank. Other varieties of everyday life gone by include a salvaged 19th-century sofa under the protection of a wooden old-fashioned NO PARKING sign. The coffee table seems to have rolled right out of a rail yard and onto the room's concrete floor, and above it salvaged beams do a period dance with a contemporary chandelier crafted from shattering cups shells. "We had to pay close attention to make sure we brought pieces of old into the new so it feels seamless, with unexpected modern things," Tracy says.

To add to the planning what you see is not as confusing, the house itself is a tale of long ago—or half of it, anyway. For nearly two centuries it has clung to a busy road in the village of Haddonfield, in Delaware Township, New Jersey, one far from a Revolution-era War camp. No one knows exactly when the house was built, even used the old old barn behind it, but probably between 1820 and 1840, says local historian Marilyn Caruso.

In any case, by the time the couple bought it, the house was in bad shape, with peeling mint green paint on the outside and small, stuffy rooms. Yet "it was weird, something about it—its bones as we pulled away the driveway, we knew this was the house," Tracy recalls. "Then we saw the pumpkins,



**OPPOSITE** A gathering space centered around a butcher block table showcases the homeowners' signature blend of old, new and industrial. Behind it are the front rooms.

**LEFT** The sitting room has a new third door, mismatched chairs, a chandelier—painted black—and a sectioned wood wall. Custom Antiquary Pie About

**BELOW** A Lin poster created the dining chairs by adding rollers to 200-year-old arm and built-in-in-wood-stained oakwood chairs, built in place by painted steel brackets. A steel wall adds rolling examples to the floor's open look.



your flowers, and the huge old fireplace with the iron swing arm where you would hang a pot, and the exposed beams, and it just felt really warm, like a house that hugs you when you walk in."

They had been living in a left in a former sugar factory outside New York City, and the preserved green space to and around Delaware Township was altering. "Real was searching for signs in the middle of the night, and this popped up," Tracy says. "We got to the next day and closed two weeks later."

That was 15 years ago. Since then the couple have poured themselves into two equally ambitious projects: restoring and updating the house in only they knew how, while also launching Zic House, the vintage goods store, in one by Haddonfield.

Sometimes it's hard to tell where one begins and the other let off. The couple finished that post-hug fireplace by repainting it and adding the level of reclaimed wood display shelf they might have at the store. When they needed a vanity and medicine cabinet for their new master bath, they simply headed home to a barned 8-foot wood display stand and a large metal-and-glass cabinet picked from a pre-CV's pharmacy.

The store really is their home away from home, right down to the frequent presence of two Noah, 12,



But there's a payoff for living the life you want: "charisma." What flows well in one place flows into the others. "Many people say, 'Oh, is your stress like your head?' I would love to live in this more!" says Tracy. Moving items in and out of existing vignettes has become such second nature that when customers are flummoxed by the challenge of

Once a second child was on the way, the couple



"It took six guys to lift that beam," says Tracey.

**ABOVE:** The new reactor bath has a steel floor and flows from a reservoir from the basement level store nearby. Including an 8-foot island whose open shelves were turned to the wall to create the vanity and an old steel pharmacy cabinet.

Tracey is hard put to explain exactly what makes an old thing like a wood freudry mold so appealing, it's like trying to describe an emotion. But she can tell you what goes into creating "totally people-friendly" settings: "In our house there's nothing you can't sit on or put your feet up on." And considering how sharp-edged the world at large is these days, that's no small thing. ■



before • after

# It takes two

A husband and wife apply DIY teamwork to their first kitchen redo, transforming a cramped cook space into the heart of the home

BY NINA MALIK | PHOTOGRAPHS BY NATHAN KIRKMAN  
PRODUCED BY TISHA LEUNG | STYLING BY MAY BOURY

Call them "two-it-yearners." Danielle and Derek Coleman, of Highland Park, Illinois, like to work as a team. They first bonded their chops on small stuff before tackling home reno. "We refinished some furniture," built a coffee table, but this didn't core our wish," Danielle says. Then they bought their first house, a 1920 Colonial Revival with a tiny kitchen, and really got busy.

The 10-by-12-foot cook space was not only too small, "it felt dirty, with layers of wallpaper coated with smoke because there was no exhaust vent," Danielle says. "Plus, the brown cabinets made the room even darker." So they annexed part of an adjoining room and the side yard next to it for an extra 10 square feet, then bumped out the sink wall 4 feet, more than doubling the footprint.

Enlarging the address, however, required calling a pro. "Since it was winter, we needed it done quickly," says Derek. But the couple committed themselves to the rest of the job, including rewiring the electrical, installing an island out of stock cabinets, building the vent hood, and crowning upper cabinets with five-piece crown molding.

Arty and bright, the kitchen is now all the Colemans hoped for, says Derek. "It feels good to come home every day and see everything we accomplished together."

**BEFORE** The kitchen was dreary, with dark cabinets, laminate counters, and a cracked tile floor. A stove jammed in the corner next to the sink didn't help.

**AFTER** The enlarged footprint made room for a spacious custom island and plenty of cabinets. "I have more storage now than I know what to do with," says Danielle.



BEFORE



Concealed in the island, the radiator also helps warm the marble countertop.

## before + after

### Custom effects

The couple chose black cabinets, making a few changes to achieve a sort of "eclectic" feel, including mixing different door styles and carpenteries. Denise also saved money by making and installing all the end panels herself. Cabinets: HGRO Hardware, Lane 5



**homeowner tip**  
DENISE COLEMAN  
HOMESWEETHEARS: "Visit resale sites to seek out bargains when shopping for appliances; you can find manuals online, if the owner doesn't provide them."



### Artful island

The island is made up of four connected base cabinets. An opening cut into one of the units (the microwave). Another cuts the end facing the range. With no door, it promises shelves to display decorative cookware and Denise's cookbooks. Microwave: KitchenAid; Range: Viking; Sink: White Ridge; Barby

### Favorite feature

The Coleman purchased the pot filler above the cooktop before they bought the house, so its placement was a key consideration. They moved the range four inches to the wall so the water line feeding the filler kept it as close as possible to their "rainbow" island, which is the precast concrete island.



### Clever cabinet

As the door slides out, the cabinet reveals the built-in storage unit. It's a dog's den, and it's also a dog's den. Denise built a dog den for her dog, the Coleman's Australian cattle dog/Border mix. The dog's den helps hold dirt and paw prints. Floor: Floor & Decor



Denise's clever cabinet reveals the dog's den, all the way to the ceiling.

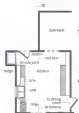


### Mini mudroom

In the corner located by the sliding door to the new deck, Denise built a high bank bench that serves as a dog den. It's also a dog den, and it's also a dog den. Denise built a dog den for her dog, the Coleman's Australian cattle dog/Border mix. The dog's den helps hold dirt and paw prints. Floor: Floor & Decor

## before

A 120 square foot box, the kitchen offered scant prep and storage areas.



## after

Bumping out in two directions more than doubled the size of the kitchen to 280 square feet.

1. Took a 10 by 8-foot space from the sunroom and edge of the deck, bumping out the sink wall 4 feet.
2. Centered bench along the new sink wall and replaced one double-hung window with three casement units.
3. Moved the full passageway to fit in a larger range with counter space on either side.



4. Created a wide curved opening to allow for easy flow between the deck and sunroom.
5. Reoriented the fridge from a remote corner to save space, leaving less space and less clutter.
6. Added an 8-foot 4-inch-long storage island with 3-inch-wide and red after built in.

# STEWARDED THE PAST

As part of a unique preservation program, three siblings living in a cluster of colonial-era houses enjoy a close connection to the 18th century—and each other

by Pamela Gwyn Kripke | photographs by Neil Roca | styling by Nicole Depostis-Polly



OPPOSITE: The gambrel-roofed Taylor, James House, built circa 1758, is one of the last one-room wooden houses left in Newport. These days it's home to Kathy Ward, above; sister, Jane Ward, her sister, Elizabeth O'Jew, and brother, John Ward, who live in houses of similar vintage nearby.

**Soon after moving** into his circa 1750 house in Newport, Rhode Island, six months ago, John Ward spotted people peering at him over his fence while he read the newspaper in his yard. When they kept looking, and looking, Ward inquired if they needed help.

"They asked me, 'Do people actually live in this house?'" recalls John, 61, with a laugh. "The NRP was gracious enough to let us be the first."

The NRP is the Newport Restoration Foundation, Ward's landlord, which takes care of more than just the two of the 73 colonial-era houses that it owns, preserves, maintains, and leases to the general public. Since 1968, the nonprofit organization founded by philanthropist Dore Duke has run a rental stewardship program that rents its houses to people who will work over their daily contract with care, acknowledge that "the needs of the house may supersede [their] own," as the written agreement states. In other words, the attractions may rest to their day-to-day survival and conditioning, no 21st-century paint colors, no triple-track storm windows or other





**"All the tenants love what Mrs. Duke did. She certainly saved the neighborhood."**

—Kathy Ward

modern forests. Most of the tenants who live in the houses, a few operate commercial businesses out of them. The NHP's collection of 38 buildings is total, including several museum-turned-museum properties, some of the largest groups of period architecture owned by a single organization in the United States.

"Doris Duke felt that if she bought these houses, which were in dreadful condition, and just restored and sold them, they'd disappear again," says Peter Ross, the foundation's executive director for the past 17 years. Another option was to turn the houses into a tourist village, as in Williamsburg, Virginia, or Stratford, Massachusetts. "But what she did was quite forward thinking," says Ross, "keeping them as residences and renting to people who identify with the mission to preserve these houses, their surroundings, and the city's architectural heritage."

After living for 35 years with views of New York's Chrysler Building, John, a retired administrator for Goldman Sachs, was living in Newport by his younger sisters, both of whom were leasing NHP houses. There and a half year after filing his application, he moved with his older sister, who had since passed away, to the Thomas Townsend House on Bridge Street, a gambrel-roofed two-story built around a single interior chimney, a typical design that maximized housing. At the end of the street, John's sister Kirby, 57, a widow, lives and works at one of the last one-master-noble houses in town. Elizabeth O'Shea, 63, who leads tours in retail and sales and is the wife Ward's child who married, lives with her husband and 11-year-old daughter around the corner on Second Street. The three siblings are involved in the neighborhood's Preservation Association.



**ABOVE** Kathy Ward walked her red hallway for her first Newport Restoration Foundation house, where she lived for five years before moving into a 19th-century French house. NHP founder Doris Duke, who died in 1990, chose colors for each of the houses' interiors. This one is painted a roseholme red with ceiling windows, and ceilings all washed in the same shade, as was typical of the era.

**TOP CENTER** The master bedroom is a great structural example of the house's interior and even red over the door. The NHP's reputation is reflected in Doris Duke's house. The house is painted a roseholme red, which the plaster walls remain white.



**ABOVE** Kathy Ward at her house in the second bedroom, where she creates handmade objects, stories, and books. Her new collection of craft tools and books is at [kathywardnewport.com](http://kathywardnewport.com).

**FAIR LEFT** Interior training members and off the dining room at the end of the street, which is kept warm in part by a brick fireplace with a lot of wood burning when it is used or needed.

**NEAR LEFT** Tight, winding stairs are a view on the way to the second floor.



"Our family heirlooms, which spent 100 years in lower Manhattan, now sit here in Newport, perfectly"

—John Ward



and its History and Archives Committee. They share Sunday dinner at the O'Shea's. John makes the mashed potatoes. They walk to the library to get it. Kathy and John have gotten so much their names grew up.

"The NRP and I call it the 'Infinite.' Maybe we are a bit of a throwback," says Elizabeth of the family relationship, one that exists very much in the present but often deeply on a sense of the past, both personal and historical. "The house is still living, and I think of Solomon Townsend, who was born in my house before me. I know when the man looked like, what he did. The people were products of their time, just as we are."

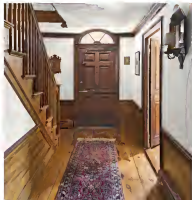
The Wards grew up in Larchmont, New York, three blocks from Long Island Sound, in a 6,700-square-foot Colonial Revival built in 1931. When their mother's cancer was settled in 2000, they attended their parents' and grandparents' funeral in the

chapel, and memorabilia, which now adorn their Newport home, finally. One set of toy hand-painted toys was split among them. John's childhood desk their grave Kathy's nursery.

A sense of the past would seem essential for setting up residence in such authentically restored structures. The NRP has returned to homes in their original architectural and decorative conditions, as close to them as possible. "Here, I like to think that if I'm doing something that could have been done in the house centuries ago," Kathy says of the sewing rag business that she runs at the top of a winding flight to her second floor. "My house used to be folded up at the corner of my Manhattan apartment."

Her house, which the NRP purchased in 2011, is a simple 852-square-foot three-story with a pedimented dormer, a gambrel roof, and original clapboards. The restoration, which took about three years to complete after 150 without top construction,

ABOVE: A Federal style twilight crosses the door at John Ward's home on Thomas Street in Newport, which is painted a bright colonial blue. Goodie's old stairs lead the entrance over more formally while the railing provides a sense of the past.



ABOVE LEFT: The living room. John has collected the house with furniture, silver, crystal, and brass collected from his Brooklyn-born parents and modern grandparents.

ABOVE RIGHT: The first floor hallway leads to the kitchen, with its pantry door on the left and the back door on the right.

LEFT: Fine white cotton stair railings and brass welcome visitors to the entryway.



"I just like an old house. I like the feeling that there is a history here, where I live every day."

—Elizabeth O'Shea



included rebuilding foundation walls, replacing some structural members, installing new windowsills, and removing a 19th-century modernization—two one-story additions. The site remains unfilled. To be given the tenacious steps, a door in the upstairs both accommodated furniture on move-in day, as did the windows, which can be removed. "I watched my loom fall in the wind," says Kirby, "but it made it."

John's house was one of the first to be purchased, in 1968, and was restored in 1974. After Hurricane Sandy flooded the house's basement in 2012, the NRF installed new plumbing and electrical. The house has three bedrooms, three and a half baths, and original floors and moldings. Though he can't envision ever leaving Bridge Seven and its proximity to his sisters, something that the other siblings cherish at this point is their adult lives, the early adjustment to the place was a hardship. "I'm not a naturally tall, but I kept trying my head on the doorframes, and my pants got caught on the leather," he says.

Adaptation is required for the 125 people currently residing there pre-Revolutionary War houses, says Koon, who adds that some have stayed for 20 to 25 years. Typical tenants are in their 40s, 50s, and 60s, and only two or three are raising children. Small structural history—no to common entry foyers, double windows, and colonial-scale chest space.

But for Elizabeth and her husband, Tim, head coach of Wayne University's men's basketball team, whose college friends daughter Madeline was 10 when they moved from Ohio to Newport, the experience has been magical. "It's a modern life in old

surroundings," says Elizabeth. In middle school, Madeline hung a Justin Bieber poster on her 20-year-old paneled door. "But she knew not to put the tape on the floor and put it in the top edge instead."

Madeline's room has a fireplace—one of five—and it started off a space-saving split main so that leads one way to the front, the other to the back. The house was well preserved, with its original doors, chair rail, casing, and chimney, when the NRF purchased it in 1973, and it stands on the same spot where it was built. (Houses in Newport were once commonly moved from one lot to another.)

Raising a child in such an environment has given the O'Sheas an opportunity to make the past come alive. "When Madeline was studying the Battle of Red Bank, we could tell her that people were living in this house when they heard about it," says Elizabeth. "We're not chasing a tourist and telling them outside, but the history is awareness of the history that came before her and will come after. Mostly, though, to her and to us, it's home."

ABOVE: Elizabeth O'Shea is now living in the historic Tenants House on Second Street. It was named for the site of the first permanent settlement to settle on Newport in 1709. The historic house has a view of the harbor and the city.



ABOVE: The house has a view of the harbor and the city. It was named for the site of the first permanent settlement to settle on Newport in 1709. The historic house has a view of the harbor and the city.

LEFT: A 15 by 15 foot fireplace dominates the view of the dining room. It is topped with a late 18th or early 19th century mantelpiece. Through the door is a sitting area with another fireplace and the back side of the original chimney.



## Historic Homes, Tenants Needed

**As Doris Duke thought:** Together with residents in the preservation of Newport, a colony of historic homes, some of the governments have also been working to help protect hundreds of historic structures in public hands.

While the Newport Historic Foundation is "tenant-friendly" and makes it clear that the NRF is looking for all kinds of people and maintenance work, a state municipal partnership program requires participants to finish and carry out all necessary construction and upkeep projects. In exchange, "resident curators" can live or operate businesses in the properties rent free with a lifetime lease. Says Peter Merrill, who manages Maryland's resident curatorship program, "For handy people who have the skills and know-how, the program works well." Typically residents invest between \$250,000 and \$350,000 for the initial lease, says Merrill, and most stay in their homes for 20 to 30 years.

Other states have used nonprofit organizations and/or profit businesses to make capital improvements and occupy the buildings, which can range from urban missions to rural inns. The state of Maryland, for instance, has a website that lists all the state's historic properties. A few of its 21 buildings currently under lease.

"Our real priority is making sure they are not broken into or bulldozed," says Kevin Allen, who manages Maryland's historic curatorship program. The state has some 300 unused buildings that it cannot maintain. "We keep them on life support," says Allen. "We may repair roofs or fix foundations to make them livable, but the door is always locked so we're not going to be building."

Connected, Delaware, Virginia's Fairfax County, New York City and Philadelphia are among the other states and municipalities—most are in the Northeast—with some sort of curatorship program. Applicants generally submit a proposal outlining how they will preserve and reuse a structure in a manner consistent with environmental conservation and public use. Its most properties must be open to the public, paying residents several times a year. (NRF applicants need not present a proposal, they are accepted in the order in which they apply through website.) Applicants are offered to current tenants. (NRF applicants are offered to current tenants.) Says Allen, "Our curators are in a 'barber'—it is a lot for everyone. For every fourth property we put up, we get no feasible response."







## Bath

**16. C.O. Collection  
Acclaim Vanity** • Wyndham Collection

Made of solid oak, this vanity is available with three options: Choose from fixtures, three finishes, two vanity tops (or granite or quartz), a tub or vessel or undermount sink, or with brushed metal hardware. *From \$1,414; cocollection.com*

**17. Talon Faucet** • Delta

Designed to make an industrial handset, the chunky quarter-turn handles for this solid brass faucet are appealing to look at and feel good on the hand. Available in chrome, nickel, and three finishes. It also has a

water-saving flow rate of just 1.5 gallons per minute. *\$759; wyndhamcollection.com*

**18. Shower Clear Shower Head** • Moen

Over time, showerheads can become loaded with scale and mold, but who bothers to clean them? This self-cleaning showerhead uses a special design to prevent scale and mold from building up. It also has a water-saving flow rate of just 1.5 gallons per minute. *\$129; moen.com*

**19. Hensley Bath Accessories with Press & Mark** • Delta

To install these bath accessories—towel bars and ring, toilet paper holder, and robe hook

(shown)—you push it against the wall and an ink stamp inside the base leaves a mark on the wall to tell you where to install. *From \$17; delta.com*

**20. Axiom Wash-Front Load Washer** • Samsung

Finally, a front loader with a truly secondary access door that lets you drop in an overdried sock after the wash has begun. We also like the time-saving steam cycle—it eliminates the need to preheat water—and the self-cleaning stainless steel drum. For this washer with a matching electric gas dryer in either black, stainless steel, or white. *From \$1,399; samsung.com*

**21. Barrington Collection Charming Knobs and Pulls** • Top Knobs

This designer collection of vintage cabinet hardware comes in nine shapes and sizes and finishes, including brushed satin nickel, polished chrome, and antique brass. *From \$5.50; topknobs.com*

**22. Rose Gold Countertop Sink** • Amerock/Stoneford

Graced with a counter top, this barely there frockety-brook occupies a small footprint of just 2.94 by 17.4 inches. An optional towel bar attaches discreetly under the front lip. *\$256; Amerock.com*

**23. Minnet Tiny Soaker Bath** • Soak Bath

A mere 43 inches long, this compact tub will slide right into almost any space. Most of the tub's exterior is made of brushed stainless steel, and the interior is made of a soft, non-slip material. *\$400; soakbath.com*

**24. Wide-View Sensor Mirror** • Delta

Use your phone to capture a light selfie from anywhere. Or use it to turn on the sensor mirror. It's a digital grade A mirror, so it's the perfect size for creating the perfect selfie. Or just choose one of the presets—sunlight, office, home, restaurant. *From \$400; delta.com*

**25. Energy 7700 Industrial Loft Style Sink** • Delta

With its modern look and integrated backsplash, this version made of stainless steel or acrylic is a perfect match for modern and rustic styles. *From \$249; delta.com*

**26. Illumina Bath Light** • Illumina

Adjustable arms on this 30-inch brushed nickel fixture allow you to position each of the four adjustable Edison bulbs—up, down, or sideways. *From \$249; illumina.com*

**27. Triangle Tiles** • Fireclay Tile

Here is a new twist on ceramic tile: 3-, 4-, 6-, and 8-inch triangles that can be mixed and matched to create one-of-a-kind designs. The tiles come in 12 colors, and you can choose to have them made with or without a grout. *From \$1.50 per square foot; fireclaytile.com*

**28. Decorative Round Drains** • Delta

We say you'll love them. We say you'll love them. We say you'll love them. *From \$1.50 per square foot; delta.com*

**29. Tapered Chamber Floor Standing Mirror** • Thirsty Fabric

The solid without being too heavy, the wall mirror can be put in any room. But because the mirror is slightly off square, you'll see your true reflection. *\$449; thirstyfabric.com*

**30. Hotel Pure Multi-Function Padded Shower Head** • Sprinkle

How often do you clean? This showerhead has a stainless steel, zinc-plated body that's up to 99 percent oil-free. It's chrome finished, so it's body of the showerhead is chrome. *From \$79; sprinkle.com*

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# Tools

## 31. Switchback Ladder

• **Winner**  
This 16-foot aluminum extension ladder converts from a standard 6:1 foot-to-foot ladder to a 2:5 configuration of folds up to 225 pounds yet tips the scales at just 21 pounds. That's half the weight of more expensive multipurpose ladders. [3M.com](http://www.3m.com)

## 32. Polyurethane Bangers Cords

• **The Bigger-Smaller**  
These colorful cords are made of a 1/4-inch-thick, chemical-resistant polyurethane that stretches to twice its length. Choose from a variety of colors. [Bangers.com](http://www.bangers.com)

## 33. Magnetic Wire-Pulling System

• **Wife Tools**  
Fish cables through wall and ceiling cavities with two high-strength magnets. One goes inside the other stays outside dragging the fish wire along with its 20-foot of length rope—in the second end point. [WifeTools.com](http://www.wifetools.com)

## 34. WaterBog Multi-Flo Pump

• **Wayne Pumps**  
When there's a flood, you'll appreciate this pump's unique ability to send water out through either its top or its side, and to work without a motor if the hard surface it flows over drains. So you can even dry out low spots in the yard. [WaynePumps.com](http://www.waynepumps.com)

## 35. Reaxx Jobsite Table Saw

• **Robert Bosch Tool Corp.**  
It's a spinning blade on this table saw comes with a pre-tilt sensor. Toss battery

into the blade under the table. The blade won't start until you flip the switch back to the "on" position. [Bosch.com](http://www.bosch.com)

## 36. IsoCore Hammer

• **Fluke**  
But hammer to core wire. The gray handle and an internal polymer sleeve on the IsoCore's handle reduce vibration and driving noise and lower weight by 50 percent. Comes in two weights: 3.5 and 4.5 pounds. [Fluke.com](http://www.fluke.com)

## 37. M18 Fuel 18-Gauge Brad Nailer

• **Milwaukee Tool**  
One reason you can't find a compressor? This battery-powered nailer fires as fast as a pneumatic tool driven by a 120-volt plug and carries 2-inch finish nails. [Milwaukee.com](http://www.milwaukee.com)

## 38. 120V Max Sliding Miter Saw Kit

• **DeWalt**  
Here's the first 12-inch miter saw to run on batteries. Its pair of 60-volt power packs provides enough run time to make nearly 300 cuts in 2x material. But it's not just the motor. You can also plug it into a standard 120-volt plug. [DeWalt.com](http://www.dewalt.com)

## 39. KwikEdge Bit

• **Proform Tools**  
Most Phillips bits tend to bend out of alignment when torqued hard—very annoying. Cheap, rugged KwikEdge bits flex



grip screws securely whether driving the driver building them out. [Bosch.com](http://www.bosch.com)

## 40. Smartech 20V Max Lithium Drill/Driver

• **Black + Decker**  
What makes this drill driver special? Its smart 20-volt battery that's what. Use your smartphone to check its charge level and make sure it's not you can't find it. Or recharge mobile devices with it. [Black+Decker.com](http://www.blackanddecker.com)

## 41. Cope-Pro Coping Jig

• **Berle Mower**  
With this clever jig, others can make light coping joints in brackets and other parts with a plunge router. Just clamp the jig to the profile, then guide the router in cutting a perfect joint. [BerleMower.com](http://www.berlemower.com)

## 42. Pulse Impact Driver

• **Edgeth Tools**  
Thousands of kind tools in light tools when everything impact drivers can't. There's

no trigger—it automatically spins faster the harder you push—until it won't find it. [Edgeth.com](http://www.edgeth.com)

## 43. Wakeout DIY 3D Imaging Sensor

• **Victron Imaging**  
An array of 30 sensors—originally designed for forest fire smoke detection—detects the sensor, paper, and other board and wire, and shows you mean Android smartphone exactly how far the sensor is from the surface they are. [VictronImaging.com](http://www.victronimaging.com)

## 44. Pegboard Folding Work Table & Sawhorse

• **Worx**  
This versatile 35-pound plastic table changes from a sawhorse to support 1,000 pounds into a worktable with 100 integrated pistol-grip clamps and bench dogs. [Worx.com](http://www.worx.com)



# Home Tech

## 45. POP Home Switch • Logitech

Tired of fumbling for your phone when opening app-enabled switches? Let these wireless buttons do the fumbling job for you. Each one performs three commands. Our favorite: Start your coffee maker while you're still in bed. \$100 for a new switch; starter pack: \$129. [logitech.com](http://logitech.com)

## 46. iComfort S30 Smart Thermostat • iComfort

Allergy sufferers, rejoice! This is the only smart thermostat able to independently monitor the local pollen count and automatically turn on the HEPA filter to filter indoor air when that count gets too high. From \$430. [icomfort.com](http://icomfort.com)

## 47. Hako Smoke Detector and CO Alarm • Jarko Smart Labs

Six different sensors in this device help risk levels of smoke, carbon monoxide, and fire. Missing fire from a hard reset, so you get fewer false alarms. It's smartphone-enabled, giving you instant notification about what's wrong. \$129. [hako-smart.com](http://hako-smart.com)

## 48. Outdoor Switch • iDevices

This is the first wireless smart switch receptacle that lets you use your smartphone to control, monitor, and schedule the operation of two separate outdoor electrical loads such as lights and fountains. \$80. [idevices.com](http://idevices.com)

## 49. L-Series Ceiling Fan • Weilco

Hulu's ceiling fans are sleek, sophisticated—and expensive. This new series offers the same performance at half the price. The top-level Series M control (\$125) synchronizes them for optimal comfort. \$430. [weilco.com](http://weilco.com)

## 50. Voice-Controlled Screen Shades • Lutron

Motorized shades have been around a while, but now, with the HomeKit-enabled Cleerix Wireless Smart Shades, you can just tell Siri what you want to raise and lower these window coverings. Screen shades, from \$349. [lutron.com](http://lutron.com)

## 51. Air Purifier • Airmore

Twice as fast, this air cleaner is twice as powerful as its replacement. It's a HEPA/charcoal filter, removing 99.97 percent of particles, allergens, odors, and VOCs from up to 1,500 square feet. It also sends smartphone alerts, reporting on indoor air quality and notifying you when it's time to replace the filter. From \$799. [airmore.com](http://airmore.com)

## 52. Ultra Quiet Garage Door Opener • Ayuda

This app-enabled garage door opener lets you add a Bluetooth speaker when opening, instead of a CD or cassette, or even a web-enabled extension cord, among other options. It's backlit, so it keeps the door working when the power's out. \$249. [ayuda.com](http://ayuda.com)

## 53. enCube Battery-Powered Generator • Kohler

Generators don't have to be loud and smelly. This deep cycle lead-acid battery pack silently delivers 1,000 watts of continuous AC or DC power with zero emissions. To extend run time, plug in the optional HD wall outlet panel (\$200). From \$1,099. [kohler.com](http://kohler.com)

## 54. Decora Digital Dimmer DIM31 • Lutron

Swap out the old, low-quality dimmer for this smartphone-enabled one, which lets you control and dim your light switches a 30-foot range. Or use it to set a schedule that operates the lights when you're at home. \$64. [lutron.com](http://lutron.com)

## 55. Gojo • Gojo

Handwashing and maintenance are key. Having a sensor that alerts guard over the hub at the heart of your smart home and makes other capabilities and features that will go on, connected to home devices, and adds your smartphone when it does. \$199 for the unit, plus \$5.99 per month for the service. [gojo.com](http://gojo.com)

## 56. Stick-Up Cam • Ring

Mount this wireless motion-activated camera outside your door, and then you can see, hear, and speak with visitors via your smartphone. It's also a good idea to get a Ring Stick-Up Cam. The optional video recording feature starts up to six months of history. \$199. [ring.com](http://ring.com)

## 57. August HomeKit-enabled Smart Lock • August

This smartphone-controlled lock attaches to the exterior side of the existing deadbolt, opening and closing it on command from your smartphone. This latest version responds to verbal commands through Siri. \$229. [august.com](http://august.com)

## 58. BeOnBulbs • BeOn

BeOn is a security-minded LED bulb with a cap in motion that turns your light into a motion detector. It's also a good idea to get a BeOn Bulb. The optional video recording feature starts up to six months of history. \$199. [beon.com](http://beon.com)



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# Outdoor

## 59. 21-inch Power+ Snowblower • Ego Power+

Finally, a cordless, single-stage snowblower that goes beyond clearing short driveways. It pairs a 16-inch stator and cutters that have enough power to cut a 21-inch wide swath of snow up to 35 feet. On a single charge, it can clear 100 cubic yards of snow or 10,000 square feet of driveway. [egopowerplus.com](http://egopowerplus.com)

## 60. Hacksaw Arm • Eklum

Sawing with one hand or two, this souped-up hacksaw has a tempered 18-inch blade that makes fast work of overgrown brush. Use it as the tip to slice off tree suckers, chop through roots or clear out palm fronds. [eklum.com](http://eklum.com)

## 61. Digital Electric Smoker with SmartChef Technology • Chef's First

Sync this electric smoker to your Wi-Fi network and feed it with a pork shoulder or a few racks of ribs. A probe tracks the meat's temperature and beeps to let you know when the meat is ready. [www.chefsfirst.com](http://www.chefsfirst.com)

## 62. 80V 10-inch Cordless Pole Saw • GreenWorks Pro

This 8-foot-long, 16½-pound tool spins at 4,000 rpm and has enough power to make 200 cuts through 3½-inch-thick branches. Charge it in 90 minutes and use it to clear brush without reaching for a ladder. [greenworks.com](http://greenworks.com)

## 63. Polyurethane Soaker Hose • Water Right

Soaker hoses made from recycled tires are tough and long-lasting. This 16-inch diameter tubing is made of a food-safe, open-cell polyurethane that is lead, phthalate, and BPA free—perfect for your veggie patch. [www.water-right.com](http://www.water-right.com)

## 64. Stand-Up Weeder • Ames

With this tool, there's no bending to pull weeds. Just press down with your foot and pull up its spring-loaded grass and root extractor. It's perfect for pulling weeds in your garden. [www.ames.com](http://www.ames.com)

## 65. Hives Backyard Lighting and Mosquito Repellent System • Nurture

When it's time to turn on the lights, the system's built-in mosquito repellent system is on. The system's built-in mosquito repellent system is on. The system's built-in mosquito repellent system is on. [www.nurture.com](http://www.nurture.com)

## 66. Trailmate Cooler • Eklum

Ten inches wide, this 70-quart cooler is perfect for transport, even on the beach. It's perfect for keeping your food cool. [eklum.com](http://eklum.com)

## 67. ReColor by Wipe New • Rust Oleum

Bring faded outdoor surfaces—including plastic, metal and vinyl—back to their original color by simply wiping on this, reusable coating. It also provides up to two years of protection against UV rays and corrosion. [www.recolor.com](http://www.recolor.com)

## 68. Perpetual Blackberry Strain • Arroyo Verde

This hardy berry hybrid has two batches of fruit—in midsummer and fall—and doesn't need a companion pollinator. In fall, the foliage is a deep burgundy and in winter the stems are striking yellow and red. [www.arroyoverde.com](http://www.arroyoverde.com)

## 69. Outdoor LED Flood Smartbulb • Eklum

App-controlled lighting is easier without the hassle of a switch, so welcome the first outdoor-rated bulb that lets you use your smartphone or tablet to turn it on, change its color, set its schedule or turn it on to music. [eklum.com](http://eklum.com)

## 70. TB4200 String Trimmer • Troy-Bilt

This trimmer can deliver the torque of an 80-hp tool with just a 4.0-hp battery. The series 70 trimmer is a lightweight motor powered by a lithium-ion battery. [www.troy-bilt.com](http://www.troy-bilt.com)

## 71. Multi-Purpose Lawn Roller • True Temper

The plastic balls found in most lawnmowers are made of steel. That's not a good idea. This roller is made of steel, which can spread seeds and mulch. [www.true-temper.com](http://www.true-temper.com)

## 72. Turbine Hacksaw Blower/Mulcher/Vac • Mow

This blower pushes 525 cubic feet of air per minute at 80 mph. That's enough power to move a ton of leaves. [www.mow.com](http://www.mow.com)



# Building Products

## 73. Essence Series Radiant Casement Window • Milgard

On the exterior of the wood window, the sash and frame are each protected by a single multi-layered phenolic sheet, simulating the patina found in old windows. *From \$1,000 for a 3 1/2-by-5-foot window.* [milgard.com](http://milgard.com)

## 34. Charred Accoya Siding • Japanese Timber

The Japanese practice of charring, here known as *shou sugi ban*, is a

coating wood surfaces—most sapless—makes wood more resistant to insects, rot, and fire. This siding is charred Accoya, a sustainably harvested pine wood treated to last 50 years outdoors. Choose from six different stain-fighting wood effects. *From \$15 per square foot.* [accoya.com](http://accoya.com)

## 75. In-Interior Bevel Siding • Boral

Although it looks like exterior siding, it actually is designed to join with together with a

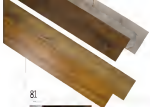
polymer binder. The material is fire-, rot- and termite-resistant, suits with regular sawblades, and is so stable that paint jobs and stains won't even bleed through. *From \$1.20 per square foot.* [boral.com](http://boral.com)

## 81. C2 Guard Fusion • C2 Paint

This water-based coating not only waterproofs exterior up to 10 years, it contains pigments that add color and UV protection



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and a polyurethane that cures in 10 minutes. Abrasion-resistant, *From \$105 per gallon.* [c2paint.com](http://c2paint.com)

## 77. Ultra Heat-TB Membrane • Schuster Systems

This rubberized membrane for heated tile floors allows electric cables to be placed in any configuration and protects the wiring from cracking. Plus, its thermal shock resistance is so strong, it can take up to 70 percent faster than these other membranes. *From \$1.50 per square foot.* [schustersystems.com](http://schustersystems.com)

## 78. Structural Panel Concrete Foundation Wall • LSI

Tough as the exterior and well lined of a poured concrete foundation. Just cut these precast panels with standard carbide blades, screw them to load-bearing steel studs and cover the panels' outside faces with a waterproof membrane. Job done. *From \$68 per square foot.* [lsipanel.com](http://lsipanel.com)

## 79. Vast Decking • Deckstruction

Unlike most composites, this decking has no wood grain, just polypropylene and ground limestone. It is durable in the factory-like hot lat, a process that makes it stronger and more stable than standard composites. *From \$3.70 per square foot.* [deckstruction.com](http://deckstruction.com)

## 80. Fuz\*It Construction Adhesive • Edgewood

This amazing stuff sticks to almost everything, is up to 50 percent stronger than other adhesives, and cures in three days. Plus, it's also rated for 100°Cs and meets clean air with a no-solvent formula. *From \$10.50 per gallon.* [fuzit.com](http://fuzit.com)

## 81. Versalia Oak Visions Flooring • Clariflo

Even though they're made of vinyl, these of the wide-plank floor in this collection look—quite convincingly—like weathered oak. Same for the other three shades of clear oak. All three: 7 1/4-inch wide by 60-inch long planks.

comes with a 10-year finish warranty. *\$10 per square foot.* [versalia.com](http://versalia.com)

## 82. Habitat Drywall • Everbuild

One screwdriver into this 1/2-inch thick plastic holds up to 30 pounds, so you don't need to secure shelve screws and/or to hang shelves, mirrors, or flat-screen TVs. The super-dense, fiber-reinforced plastic core also resists impacts and discolors less than regular drywall. And it's fit for busy hallways and restrooms. *About \$10 per square foot.* [everbuild.com](http://everbuild.com)

## 83. SnapDry Door and Trim Paint • Sherwin-Williams

No lint, no smudges, no dust, no curing that traps lint in the paint. Just snap the paint down and washes from the wall. It's a game-changer. You can safely clean the paint in 10 minutes. The paint is harmless and makes it very resistant to dirt and fingerprints. *\$10 per gallon.* [sherwin-williams.com](http://sherwin-williams.com)

## 84. RockSolid Metallic Floor Coating Kit • Boral-Glenn

The luminous pigments in this unique heat-cure resin give your interior concrete floors a glossy, attention-grabbing finish that can be done in as little as 24 hours. And thanks to the product's clever liquid design, there's no need for measuring. *From \$10 per gallon.* [boral-glenn.com](http://boral-glenn.com)

## 85. ScotchBlue Platinum Painter's Tape • 3M

This new film-backed tape, based on 3M ScotchBlue, stretches around corners, stops paint bleed, and protects and comes off cleanly in as little as 10 days. *From \$10 per roll.* [3m.com](http://3m.com)

## 86. MycoBoard • Bioactive

Most waterproofing adhesives off-gas eye-irritating formaldehyde. These panels are held together with bio-based mycoadhesive, which breaks down any pollution, including formaldehyde. *From \$12 per square foot.* [mycoadhesive.com](http://mycoadhesive.com)

# Finishing Touches

## 81. Avec Sets • L'VIZ

It's easy to say you're into vintage-style tables, but the Avec Sets from L'VIZ are a different story. These sets of two tables are made from solid wood and feature a unique, hand-painted finish that gives them a rustic, yet modern look. They're perfect for a dining room or a kitchen. **From \$149, l'viz.com**

## 88. Spanish Tile Stonel Set • Arroyo Design Studio

Decorative cement tiles are all the rage, but if you're looking for a tile that's also a functional piece, the Spanish Tile Stonel Set from Arroyo Design Studio is a great choice. The tiles are made from a combination of stone and cement, giving them a unique, rustic look. They're perfect for a kitchen or a bathroom. **From \$149, arroyodesignstudio.com**

## 85. Pittsburgh Crank Desk • Penny Burn

With its industrial good looks, the Pittsburgh Crank Desk from Penny Burn is a desk that's as functional as it is stylish. The desk is made from solid wood and features a unique, hand-painted finish that gives it a rustic, yet modern look. It's perfect for a home office or a workshop. **From \$149, pennyburn.com**

## 92. Streamline Deca Cabinet Knob • Modern of America Merchandise

Reproduced from a 1930s Art Deco style, this cabinet knob is a perfect addition to any modern interior. The knob is made from solid wood and features a unique, hand-painted finish that gives it a rustic, yet modern look. It's perfect for a kitchen or a bathroom. **From \$149, modernofamerica.com**

## 93. Sutra Cord Beads • AWC

Think of them as beads for your light fixtures. These aluminum-coated, 1/8-inch plastic beads are made from a combination of plastic and metal, giving them a unique, rustic look. They're perfect for a kitchen or a bathroom. **From \$149, sutra.com**

## 92. Studio Modern Montclair Sierel Deca Terracotta Tile • Walker Zanger

Each 11 1/2" x 11 1/2" tile has a raised and recessed surface and a subtle cracked glaze that gives it a rustic, yet modern look. It's perfect for a kitchen or a bathroom. **From \$149, walkerzanger.com**

## 94. Standard Luma Stone Tile • Walker Zanger

Each 11 1/2" x 11 1/2" tile has a raised and recessed surface and a subtle cracked glaze that gives it a rustic, yet modern look. It's perfect for a kitchen or a bathroom. **From \$149, walkerzanger.com**

## 94. Standard Luma Stone Tile • Walker Zanger

Each 11 1/2" x 11 1/2" tile has a raised and recessed surface and a subtle cracked glaze that gives it a rustic, yet modern look. It's perfect for a kitchen or a bathroom. **From \$149, walkerzanger.com**

## 95. Roman Ceiling Fan • Monitor

With its industrial good looks, the Roman Ceiling Fan from Monitor is a fan that's as functional as it is stylish. The fan is made from solid wood and features a unique, hand-painted finish that gives it a rustic, yet modern look. It's perfect for a kitchen or a bathroom. **From \$149, monitor.com**

## 96. Hazel Pendant Lights • Rejuvenation

With its industrial good looks, the Hazel Pendant Lights from Rejuvenation are lights that are as functional as they are stylish. The lights are made from solid wood and feature a unique, hand-painted finish that gives them a rustic, yet modern look. They're perfect for a kitchen or a bathroom. **From \$149, rejuvenation.com**

## 96. Magnolia Home Premium Interior Paint • Aisle

With its industrial good looks, the Magnolia Home Premium Interior Paint from Aisle is a paint that's as functional as it is stylish. The paint is made from solid wood and features a unique, hand-painted finish that gives it a rustic, yet modern look. It's perfect for a kitchen or a bathroom. **From \$149, aisle.com**

## 96. Chinoiserie Wallpaper • Treva-Joyner

With its industrial good looks, the Chinoiserie Wallpaper from Treva-Joyner is a wallpaper that's as functional as it is stylish. The wallpaper is made from solid wood and features a unique, hand-painted finish that gives it a rustic, yet modern look. It's perfect for a kitchen or a bathroom. **From \$149, treva-joyner.com**

## 100. Customizable Goodyear Barn Lights • Coconet

With its industrial good looks, the Customizable Goodyear Barn Lights from Coconet are lights that are as functional as they are stylish. The lights are made from solid wood and feature a unique, hand-painted finish that gives them a rustic, yet modern look. They're perfect for a kitchen or a bathroom. **From \$149, coconet.com**











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Price of John F. Kennedy 50¢ and George Washington 25¢ coins are included in the price.



# save This Old House

**PRICE** \$29,900  
**LOCATION** Coolidge, NY  
**CONTACT** Christine Macgregor  
 516.231.1313 christine@thisoldhouse.com

**THE HISTORY** In the mid-1800s, Coldkill was a major agricultural hub and trading post, located in no small part by its close proximity to Albany, the state capital. As the town grew and the economy transformed from its agrarian roots, enterprising builders by the names of Bendish and Mercers began constructing houses, including this one, to cater to the burgeoning merchant class. Public records don't indicate its first owner, but the house was part of a cluster built in the 1860s, named for their large lots and formal architectural plans. Over time, the house was bought and sold by a number of families, it has been vacant for several years.

**WHY SAVE IT?** The house features arched windows in the public mode, leaded and stained glass pocket doors, and detailed trimwork. Its site on nearly a acre and corner with a large, gambrel-roofed barn.

**WHAT IT NEEDS** The house will require a new roof and systems, as well as plaster and cosmetic updates. The original front porch—similar to those seen on restored houses in the block—could be rebuilt. A previous owner modified a first-floor window bay to add a door and an exterior corner black chimney (on the left side of the house is painted, both of which could be removed for historical accuracy. It's a big project, but one that would allow a new owner to enjoy a house that authentically blends all the charms of country and small-town living, just 40 miles from Albany and 150 from New York City. —ALAN HORN

Small-town  
 farmhouses:  
 filled with  
 charm!



1. The 1,400-square-foot house has four bedrooms and just one bath. Built on a third of an acre, it's one of several houses in the block. 2. The handsome arched windows are seen from the second-floor landing. 3. In addition to the original stained glass, these first-floor windows retain their multi-paned design and leaded panes. 4. The left bay in back could be converted to a workshop or studio space, or finished as a guest house.

**GET A HOUSE?**  
 If you're looking for a house that's been around for a while, you'll want to check out this old house. It's a great place to live, and it's a great place to work. Call Christine Macgregor at 516.231.1313 for more info.



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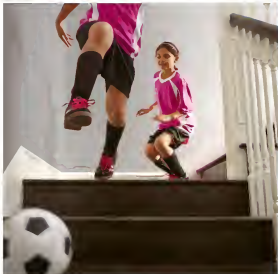
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